Performance Task: Expanding the Diary

To end our study of Sherman Alexie’s novel *The Absolutely True Dairy of a Part-Time Indian*, we will be expanding the world of the novel through performances addressing problems faced by characters of the book. Though our approach will revolve around creativity, we will draw inspiration and support from the text. The project will be done in pairs, and there will be a variety of options for performance. After we “screen” the performances in class, we will work together to polish and organize them into a “Live Book Report” that we will perform for friends and family.

Rationale:

This project is designed to blend your knowledge of the text with your ability to write, collaborate, and perform. Having multiple options allows you to pick the one best suited to your creative strengths and preferred medium. By expanding the audience to include parents and peers, this project becomes much more personal, hopefully igniting your passion and creativity.

Assignment:

**Phase 1:** **Brainstorm:** This assignment asks you to focus on specific elements of the book and expand them. The first step, with your partner, is to decide which performance option below suits you best. Second, you will need to find a topic from the book that will fit with your performance option. Third, you will need to conference with me about your initial ideas and receive my approval. (Day 1)

Options:

a) Write a script showcasing an interaction between two of the characters, supported by their characterizations from the book. This script can take the form of parody of a tv show like a talk show or soap opera or crime drama. Get creative. The circumstances can be fictional, but the characters must act like they would in the book.

b) Focus on a problem faced by Native Americans in the novel. Using the novel and other sources, create a news program from the reservation. You could have a serious report on issues and problems, but also add some fun with news stories about life on the rez, or sports scores, or a weather report. I will need citation of any facts you use in your reports.

c) Write and act out a series of letters between two characters. Use characterization to make the voice authentic, address issues from the novel through this dialogue. These letters can be emotional so have fun with this and make it entertaining.

d) Find a defining moment/scene from the novel, or chose a cultural issue we discussed. Explore this moment/issue through music, art, current events, and photographs. Create a narration to accompany your media presentation that explains your topic and how the media represents it. Make this narration fluid, considering even some poetic elements. Ask questions, make us think!

**Phase 2: In-class work days:** during these work days, you will begin writing scripts, doing research, finding media sources if necessary, and dividing responsibilities/roles. After two work days I will begin meeting with you, group by group, to see that you are making progress. (Days 2, 3, & 4).

**Phase 3: Rough draft of written element:** Whatever your written element may be (script, series of letters, narration for media interpretation), you will turn in a typed rough draft to me at this point. There is not specific length, but if your material seems to be lacking at this point I will give you feedback on that. Due on Day 5. To be returned by me on Day 6.

**Phase 4: In-class presentations of projects:** Presentation of projects will include a final draft of your written element as well as a brief introduction, before you present, of what you chose to expand on and why (a scene from the book, character interactions, problems faced by Native Americans). This performance will be graded by the enclosed rubric, tying together all parts of the project. These will be held two or three days after I return your rough drafts to you. These may require outside collaboration time, especially if you intend to make a video.

**Phase 5: Live Book Report Night:** As a class, we will make decisions on order of presentation and other performance elements surrounding the event. We will decide how to get the word out to our family, friends, and teachers, and work as a class to organize and stage our performance. You will be graded on participation for this part of the project.

**Grading: Total Project worth 150 pts.**

**Conference & Approval: 10 pts.**

**Rough Draft: 20 pts.**

**Final Written Project and Performance: 100 pts. (see rubric attached)**

**Participation in Live Book Report: 20 pts.**

Expanding the Diary Assignment Rubric

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scored Items** | **Exemplary = 5** | **Proficient = 3** | **Emerging = 1** | **Score** |
| **Characters & Content** | * Characters translate seamlessly, acting as they would in the novel. * Content explicitly addresses an issue faced by Junior or Native Americans in the novel | * Characters are mostly believable, some aspects depart from the novel * Content addresses an issue from the novel, but not very clearly; lacks focus | * Characters act too different from the novel characterization; they are not believable. * Content does not address an issue from the novel; purpose is unclear |  |
| **Organization** | * Subject of presentation fits with organization of the novel * Introduction explained concept and relation to novel | * Subject of presentation seems removed from the novel and not wholly believable * Introduction explains concept but lacks relation to the novel. | * Subject of pres. does not fit with novel, seems unrelated or unbelievable * Introduction either not present or lacks explanation and relation to novel. |  |
| **Creativity** | * Presentation was creative and original * Engaging to the audience; good use of emotion | * Presentation had some original elements, but did not expand far from the novel. * Some attempt to include humor or emotion | * Presentation lacked originality; too similar to a scene from the novel * No attempt to include humor or emotion |  |
| **Presentation** | * All aspects of presentation worked smoothly * Presentation was audible; * Energy and commitment in performance | * Presentation smooth for the most part * Not always able to understand presenters * Lack of enthusiasm in presentation | * Glitches in presentation made in hard to follow * Hard to hear, speaking to fast or soft * Little to no evidence of enthusiasm |  |
| **Written Product Conventions** | * Strong control of conventions * Errors are few and minor * Sources used are cited | * Control of most writing conventions * Sources used are listed but not properly cited | * Frequent significant errors may impede readability * Sources not listed |  |
|  | **TOTAL POINTS \_\_\_\_\_/ 25 x 4 = \_\_\_\_\_\_/100** | | | |

Adapted from http://www.rubrics4teachers.com/pdf/6TRAITSWRITING.pdf